competitiveness and efficiency. Accordingly, to improve the financial performance and profitability of SAIL, the Company has drawn up a comprehensive financial and business restructuring plan. The measures outlined in the plan include, inter-alia;

(i) A reduction in operational costs by reducing input costs, reducing consumption of raw materials and other inputs and by increasing operating efficiencies;

(ii) Improvement in techno-economic parameters such as fuel and power consumption;

(iii) Increased recovery for services/facilities;

(iv) Right sizing manpower through a Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS);

(v) Assets restructuring;

(vi) Disposal of idle assets; and

(vii) Financial restructuring.

Rise in import of seconds and defective steel items

73. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been alarming rise in the import of seconds and defective steel items and tin plates into the country which are banned for sale in the Western countries;

(b) whether Government's decision to reduce the floor price for the import of these items has further aggravated the situation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) to (c) There has been increase in the import of seconds and defectives steel items and tin plates in the past two-three years. As per available information, sale of these items in some European countries is not banned, however their use in packaging of food items is prohibited. In order to restrict

the imports of second/defective steel items and Tin plates the Government has fixed minimum floor prices in December, 1998. The floor prices have been revised with effect from November, 1999 on the basis of the average export prices of these items from non-dumping sources. Thus domestic steel producers are unlikely to be adversely affected.

Financial assistance from North-East Region

74. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) The main programmes of his Ministry;

(b) The number of departments which are under his Ministry; and

(c) The amount of financial assistance released/proposed to be released during the Eighth Five Year Plan and Ninth Five Year Plan for North-East Region, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JUAL ORAM): (a) The main programmes of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs relate to Social Security, socio-economic and educational development of Scheduled Tribes through implementation of various economic and educational schemes through the State Government/U.T. Administrations and promotion of voluntary efforts for tribal welfare.

(b) The erstwhile Tribal Development Division in Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is now Ministry of Tribal Affairs and this Ministry has no other Department.

(c) Details are given in the Annexure.

[*See Appendix* 188, *Annexure no.* 1]

Criminal case against J.D. (ADMN.) DOP.

75. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while furnishing reply to a Member of Parliament, the concerned Joint Secretary had admitted that Joint Direcctor (Admn.) in the Directorate of printing was found involved in a criminal case which was enquired into by the concerned Police Authorities on the allegation